

# Secret Springs of Dublin Song

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Secret Springs of Dublin Song

*This Edition consists of 500 numbered copies,  
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# SECRET SPRINGS OF DUBLIN SONG



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*"Earth is full of secret springs"*

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## PREFACE



WHEN I read this little book, written with a wit so nimble, so biting, so flighty, so elegant, I asked myself, considering this preface: "How shall my net, fashioned for the capture of butterflies, seek to detain a gnat?" ¶ Danger attends the exploration of these secret springs; for just as the Poddle, Dublin's subterranean river, may have reared above it stately buildings, cathedrals, government offices, so these poetic springs may be moving secretly beneath the most stately occupations, and it will arouse the worst passions of the authors should they remain undiscovered. Yet, disguised in my own name, as in this Preface, I feel more confident of obscurity than these anonymous ones whose desire for concealment has driven them between the covers of this book. ¶ No candid reader of these verses, however, would for a moment suspect that their anonymity is due to any modesty on the part of the authors: they are merely seeking to avoid each other's jealousy or spite. ¶ The verses reel at times, are heady or frothy, and one catches a whiff of the spirituous atmosphere of the town. ¶ Idle fancies, whimsical fancies, conscienceless objectors to the legitimate service of literature, they have now been conscripted and this is their goose-step. ¶ This is, on the whole, I think, a witty rather than a funny book. Readers intending to laugh will

please note this. Yet there are places where the fun emerges successfully. ¶ Whistler, an exquisite master of impishness in literature, said that nobody was qualified to criticise who was not himself a practitioner in the art. As one who was not invited to be a contributor to the verse in this volume, I append here, in the only place open to me, this, perhaps inadequate, credential :

If I should say : The wine is thin,  
And sigh for a full-fruited hour  
Of my own vintage, you'd step in,  
Reader, and say : The grapes are sour,  
If I should say : The wine is thin.

SUSAN L. MITCHELL.



## CONTENTS

	Page
Epigram to the Authors	1
Spring in Dublin	2
A Double Ballad of Dublin	4
"Il doit aller pour oyer des nouvelles chez les barbiers"	6
The Poet and his Wife	7
Johnny, I hardly knew you	9
To Citizen Elwood in South America	11
Rondeau	12
The Poet to the Physician	13
The Physician replies	13
The Wild Dog compares himself to a Swan	14
Little Jack Horner	15
To Carson, Swimmer of Sandycove	16
The Isles of Greece	20
The Hermit	24
Ideal Poems—(1) S. O'S.	25
(2) Y . . . S	26
From "The Queen's Threshold"	27
The Old Man refreshing himself in the morning	28
On the death of his Aunt	29
Lugete Veneres Cupidinesque	31
Ambition in Cuffe Street	33
Praise and Friendship	34
To the Maids not to walk in the Wind	35
The Hermit	36
Threnody on the Death of Diogenes, the Doctor's Dog	40
How would it be?	43
The Pilgrimage to Plunkett House	44
A Lament for George Moore	47
To George Moore on the occasion of his Wedding	49
Fame	51



## EPIGRAM TO THE AUTHORS

My Lords, your Muse, like Rosalind, sees fit  
To trick her Beauty with fantastic wit :  
Puts on disguise, nor thinks it any shame  
Thus to intrigue her ardent lover, Fame.  
Most wantonly in Motley forth she trips  
While Laughter adds a challenge to her lips,  
Knowing too well her charms defy disguise  
And Mirth but shoots new arrows from her eyes.  
She wears the Mask of Momus at the Rout,  
But underneath coquettishly peeps out,  
Seeming—the jade !—so impudently fair  
The gods themselves must ogle her and stare.

## SPRING IN DUBLIN

When East wind's roll of ruin blows,  
And tenements hang out more clothes,  
And old men go on frozen feet;  
And spits lie spattered on the street,  
And hazards held at sinecure,  
Fill all the air with dry manure ;

When Dublin sends by dirt and rheum  
Brigades of babies to the tomb,  
And on the side-cars, holding seven,  
The pic-nic parties seek Glasnevin,  
And back-yards like a play by Synge  
In gloom and squalor hail the Spring.

Then she comes tripping down the street,  
And not a Bobbie on his beat  
Can hold her up, or stop the Spring  
From shamelessly soliciting—  
Even the Vigilance Committee  
Can't keep the Spring from Dublin City.

Her motion may not be adjourned,  
She is perennially returned.  
She pays no rates, she does not care  
Who schemes to be the next Lord Mayor.  
Sweet fosterer of bud and graft,  
She leaves Cork Hill unepitaphed !

Now dogs at every corner range,  
New Limericks fill the Stock Exchange,  
The ducks now splash in Stephen's Green,  
Where cripples on the benches lean,  
And merrily the children race  
Round noseless men with half a face.

She strews fresh sawdust in the pubs,  
Fresh laurels in the area tubs.  
Rathfarnham's lanes with song she fills,  
And lovers' monosyllables :  
On what does Spring not ope the door  
When off to Paris sails George Moore ?

## A DOUBLE BALLAD OF DUBLIN

Dublin Town was a town before  
You were a man or your grandfather.  
The Danes are buried at Inchicore  
Who walled it in where the hurdles were.  
The ridge of the Hazels was ringed with care  
And taught in its turrets of stone to frown :  
At mountain and marsh would the watchman  
stare  
And winding Liffey by Dublin Town.

Thus it was in the days of yore.  
Where will you find the like of it? Where?  
London's fog-coloured faces? More  
Numerous—yes—but they are not rare ;  
A city that people of all kinds share—  
Keep to blue eyes and tresses of brown—  
Aberdeen? Well, you have me there!  
But winding Liffey in Dublin Town.

Dwelling and office and store on store,  
Merchants and money to change for ware,  
Ships in the harbour, goods on the shore,  
Will not make a town if the soul be bare.  
Here is a dream and tradition to spare,  
Memoried sorrow and old renown ;  
Hearts quick to soften and ready to flare  
And winding Liffey in Dublin Town.



Though in the houses of ancient lore  
Bishops divide the Episcopal chair,  
Many there are when the weather is froze  
Sights and sounds goodly to see and to hear :  
The tower of Christ Church tall and square  
When the high Christmas stars look down ;  
Bells intermingling sounds in the air,  
And winding Liffey in Dublin Town.

City where magical twilights pour  
Drawing the beautiful hills anear,  
Town where the citizens out of door  
Longing to talk, to the streets repair,—  
Gossips obstructing the thoroughfare—  
To gaze where the reek is northward blown  
Melting to bronze in the sunset glare  
And winding Liffey in Dublin Town.

But to acknowledge the truth, Asthore,  
In spite of what happens to those who dare,  
Here there is something corrupt at the core  
A city unclean with a paid Lord Mayor  
Pestilence, sorrow and poverty's lair,  
Pride's in a grandeur overthrown,  
Bawdy and faithful, squalid and fair—  
And winding Liffey in Dublin Town.

“IL DOIT ALLER POUR OYER DES  
NOUVELLES CHEZ LES BARBIERS”

—*Pierre Gringoire*

The trees unhidden their thirst may slake  
At clouds brimmed over in dewy May  
And, super-sated, thereafter shake  
Their Bacchic branches, or night and day  
Or lulled in slumber, or half awake;  
But we who are made of a thirstier clay  
Must curb our potions or static stay:  
Therefore, for old Silenus' sake  
Soothly, and straightly, nor make delay,  
Tell us what do the Barbers take?

For ye drink deeply and oft as they,  
O cultured coiffeur, O razored rake,  
And yet your mornings are ever gay,  
Nor fault nor fumble, nor fudge nor fake,  
Evoke fierce anger, or make us say  
With fell fierce meaning, and nerves that quake,  
(And thirst no potion may quite allay),  
Tell us what *do* the Barbers take?

Prince of the pupils of Carousel  
Or ever the Golden Bowl we break  
E'er yet we find in the fiery lake  
The thirst that our souls will keep alway  
Swiftly and soothly and straightly tell  
Tell us what do the Barbers take?

## THE POET AND HIS WIFE

*Poet :*

Behold the Spring is here !  
I know it by the clean  
And verdurous veneer  
That brightens Stephen's Green.

Away ! I fain would fare  
Where dewy leaves expand  
And weave in sunny air  
Their dances o'er the land !

*His Wite :*

How can your hopes be such  
As gain by getting gone  
Where Spring produces much  
The same phenomenon ?

The leaves make here a shade,  
The pleasant air is scented  
And there is the Cascade :  
Why are you not contented ?

*Poet :*

Where Tolka water fawns  
It makes its little pond white,  
But this of Ardilaun's  
Is passing through a conduit.

Besides where all is change  
From Winter black to green  
A poet needs to range  
To meet the change of scene.

*His Wife :*

Beauty with Swiftness goes  
And Spring with those elopers :  
But where the Tolka flows  
There stands "The Jolly Topers."

And though I love you Dear,  
Who am so long your bride,  
I love you when sincere  
But not when "bonafied."

## JOHNNY, I HARDLY KNEW YOU

### *In Dublinese*

Where are those legs with which you run  
When you went to shoulder the gun?  
Indeed your dancing days are done.  
Oh Johnny, I hardly knew you!

Where are those eyes that were so mild,  
When of my love you me beguiled?  
Why did you skedaddle from me and the child?  
Oh Johnny, I hardly knew you!

### *In Swinburnese*

Alas! for the going of swiftmess, for the feet of the  
running of thee,  
When thou wentest among the swords and the  
shoutings of captains made shrill.  
Woe is me for the pleasant 'places! Yea, one shall  
say of thy glee  
"It is not," and as for delight, the feet of thy  
dancing are still.

Also thine eyes were mild as a lowlit flame of fire,  
When thou wovest the web whereof wiles were  
the woof, and the warp was my heart!  
Why left'st thou the fertile field whence thou  
reaped'st the fruit of desire?  
For the change of the face of thy colour I know  
thee not who thou art.

*Miltonese*

Johnny, though clear mine eyes, to speculate  
No more than thine that smoke of battle fogs  
By Him permitted are who grants to frogs  
The usage of blunt orbs : to remonstrate  
Be loth. Forgive me when I hesitate  
To hail thee, darkling. Rather with the hogs  
Would I consort than summon back to clogs  
Limbs overplied in service of the State.  
Thou in that service zealous wast, and we  
Can proudly answer to detractors rude :  
We loved our Saints espoused : but Liberty  
Loved more. Thou sharest in the glorious mood  
Of him whom his much-tried Penelope  
Met, reaching to great fame by Fortitude.



TO CITIZEN ELWOOD IN  
SOUTH AMERICA

Ah, John  
Since you are gone  
We've proved you what we knew before  
The One and Only  
You left us lonely  
When to that Southern land you bore  
Our mighty loss and sadder sequel  
Because we cannot find your equal.

The gloom remains,  
And things are formal.  
The gloom, alas! with us is normal  
And nothing lights it or de strains.  
Oh, send us of your wisdom keen  
Something to act as formaline  
Acts on the effluence of drains;  
Something to fumigate like sulphur  
And ruffle all the black rats' dull fur  
That spoils the colour in our brains.

Oh, merge us in a cloud of wit  
Until we 'gin to lift with it  
And lose ourselves as it enshrouds!  
Oh, send to bring the Springtime back  
Your basic old subliming knack—  
The gods are hidden in the clouds!

## RONDEAU

O Moore, when first with fire and sword  
Your ancestors sacked Baltimore,  
The townsmen cried with one accord:  
    "O Moor!"

Transmuting Time your race abhorred  
Transmuted and on Irish shore  
Beheld "The" at a chieftain's board,  
    O'More.

But now from bois and boulevard  
Your risky storiettes you store  
And wonder why you're not encored  
    Oh, Moore!

## THE POET TO THE PHYSICIAN

If Fortune ever seem to send  
Fame to my verse before my end,  
Come with your healing arts and save  
From early fame by early grave.

## THE PHYSICIAN REPLIES

If Fortune ever seem to send  
Fame to your verse and not an end,  
Then with your verses must endure  
My failure to effect a cure.

## THE WILD DOG COMPARES HIMSELF TO A SWAN

Though crowds once gathered if I raised my hand,  
I have grown now to be like that old swan  
That, lonely, swimming, frowns the summer through  
Because he finds his voice inadequate ;  
Or that he must so constantly seek out  
The base intruders that have built their nests  
In difficult places underneath his wings.

## LITTLE JACK HORNER

Cornuti proles petiit penetralia tecti  
Scriblitam rodens quam Saturnalia donant.  
Extrahit inde puer extenso pollice prunum :  
'Non Numa non Tatius prunum me castior edit.'

### *Translation*

Perhaps in those old, deer-killing days  
When he first wore the horn,  
Hence 'Horner' called from froward ways,  
His famous son was born,  
Who, self-appraised, his father's pride  
For manners and good taste, he  
Precocious took a tart aside  
And gorged that Christmas pasty.

## TO CARSON, SWIMMER OF SANDYCOVE

Where hast thou been since salt to Sandycove  
Thrice three Springtides have ebbd and flowd  
again,  
Aye, sighing ebbd because thou wert not "in"?  
Why on the banks of granite dost thou rove  
As, in old time, on Sundays thou wert seen  
In suit of serge dressed like the sailor-men,  
What time their long precarious voyage they make  
To Murray's haven and the inside bar?  
Thou seemest strange; we don't know where we are  
For Carson out of water takes the cake!

Or didst thou seek some mild Antartic isle  
Where by thy side the snoring walrus swam,  
Whose second teeth come, when they come, to stay?  
Where thou could'st meet the icebergs with a smile,  
Nor for the Polar Bruin care a damn,  
If he, perchance, pursued thee on thy way?  
For what dost thou, O Carson, care for cold,  
Thou that wast far below our Zero born!  
Need I repeat that "Winter's Tale" so old:  
The Bobbie wakened by thy rathe lanthorn?

No, thou art Carson and none other one!  
It was for thee that lame McCurdy lied,  
And Griffith's towel was untimely wet;  
It was for thee revering Starkey tried

With daily toil until that stroke he won  
 Which thou employest to the land to get.  
 Aye even here the glory of thy hide  
 Where all are over-famous faintly burns  
 While Ireland, like Buda Pesth, returns  
 To be like thee who never missed a tide.

Where hast thou been? For surely thou hast strayed  
 Within some evil influence malign,  
 Or in the Adelaide was aye delayed  
 And, for the ocean, swam'st in "normal saline."  
 Ay! Gordon loosed for thee that Gordian knot  
 That is thy umbilicus well-renowned,  
 And Starkey mingled, though he knew it not,  
 Black draughts for thee, and for thee did compound!  
 Alas, O Golden Carson, thou hast quaffed  
 From lover's hands an ebb-compelling draught!

Ah, horrid dream of fact be thou factitious!  
 Glide hither every nymph, each Nereid glide,  
 Now undistinguished from your native foam!  
 Old Nereus and old Proteus be propitious,  
 And buoy my keel of song with flowing tide  
 Until unto those hidden isles I come—  
 Far hidden in the distance of blue seas,—  
 Where Carson breasts the waters let me sail;  
 And if, it chance, that I discover these,  
 To float my leaky vessel I'll go bail!



Loosen the sail and please support my ship so  
That I may sail where only Carson swam.  
None else save Carson and the grave Ulysses,  
Laertes' son that left the quaint Calypso.  
(He couldn't for her bosom care a damn  
If, like thee, Carson, he preferred then this sea's)  
There didst thou swim and round thee Dolphins  
sported,  
There nymphs bespoke thee, as thy side they won.  
Thou thankd'st them, "trudging," and most kindly  
snorted  
In articulate communion!

Perchance there fishers fishing for the tunny,  
Which first they catch, and then proceed to spear,  
(And, Kirke-like, later, bleed the purchaser)  
Beholding thee grew suddenly less funny  
And each one whispered in the other's ear—  
Sitting with eyes shut fast, afeard to stir—  
"O leave the sea, 'tis not to be relied on!  
I saw by accident, and in the rear,  
(I fear a tempest must be very near),  
The bottom of the body of Poseidon!"

But thou, swim on! and when thou comest to fare on  
The seaward tide that shoreward will not turn,  
But meets the dim unnavigable sea, [Charon,  
Though we must die, thou needst not go with

Nor obol in thy mouth will mourners lay ;  
And he will mourn in vain, if any mourn,  
For thou wilt, slowly, where the Styx is wound  
Unwind thy vain, unmeaning cerements  
And take—the temperature, at all events,  
Back with thee swimming to regain the ground !

## THE ISLES OF GREECE

Silent Sailor man attend,  
Ere you voyage from Ringsend.  
By your walk and wad I ween  
You have in the Navy been.  
Jones, whose Christian name is Davy,  
Spare you long to grace the Navy!

Navy—nay, I'm quite erratic,  
I meant to say the Adriatic.  
Tell me have you seen the sea grow  
Darker down by Montenegro?  
And were you the sailor man to  
Sail the waters of Lepanto?

Did they rise, or were they murky  
Over all those men from Turkey?  
For, you know, 'twas very pleasant  
That the Cross should swamp the Crescent:  
Thus both you and I and others  
Kept the faith that keeps us brothers.

Well, we'll leave them there in peace  
Tell me of the Isles of Greece.  
Grow they olive, vine and palm?  
Was it boisterous or calm?  
Did you make a nota bene  
As you sailed by Mitylene?

Are there really now in loads  
Rhododendrons grown in Rhodes ?  
Say what isle would strike a roamer  
As a birth-place fit for Homer ?  
Did you see the isle Calypso  
Lived in when she got the slip so ?

What would Ajax find amiss  
Now in twice-washed Salamis ?  
Did you, in effusive joy,  
Point and mutter : " There was Troy ? "  
Did you not with grief and woe  
View the Archipelago ?

But the sailor turned to me  
With an aspect like the sea,  
When against some rocky strait  
It must needs expectorate,  
With, " I don't give " (pardon, please,) " A damn for all your isles of Greece."

Then I shouted : " Let me greet you,  
Sailor, I am glad to meet you !  
I have longed for one of these  
Health-restoring heresies ;  
I am sick of affectation,  
Thank you for emancipation ! "

"Yes," he said, "it's rather funny  
That the people waste their money  
Seeking Homer, Paul, or Pilate  
In each ordinary islet;  
Searching for heroic spooks,  
On excursions run by Cook's."

Ah, his eyes were bluer than  
The Mediterranean,  
And he looked on Life, a bowl,  
Steadily, and drank it whole,  
And cared not, with his mind at ease,  
"A damn for all the Isles of Greece!"

Sailor, but a landsman speaks  
You are Greeker than the Greeks.  
It is we are out of joint,  
From our feverish touch aroint!  
Our indecent souls' exposure  
Shrinks before your self-composure.

Hero-lovers, we'd insist  
That Plato was a Methodist,  
And our "Greece, the beautiful,"  
But an ancient Sunday-school.  
Ah, your talk is vitalising  
After years of Arnoldising!

We brood ever on the Past,  
But you sail before the mast ;  
Time but serves to enervate  
Us, but you are up-to-date,  
And you thus lay bare of myths  
Ionian thalattaliths.

## THE HERMIT

Now wintry floods have quenched the fire  
That lingered on the rowan trees  
And all the year's funereal pyre.  
The frost is on the sloe berries  
And in the Round House overhead  
The hermit sets his wintry bed.

Now by the moss-bared boulder stones  
The mountain stream runs deep and strong  
Hurling dead twigs like bleached bones,  
And in the bushes all day long  
The hermit's hens of warmth bereft  
Croonaun with scarce a feather left.

Now underneath the dropping eaves  
In wintry silence, wing by wing,  
Amongst the constant holly leaves  
The birds draw close for comforting ;  
And in the ' turret overhead '  
The hermit wishes he were wed.



## IDEAL POEMS

### (1) S. O'S.

Child, there are mists in my mind,  
In the midst of the mist is a sigh,  
And the sigh it is blown by the wind,  
In the midst of the wind there am I.

When I go out of my cave  
And clothe myself with the wind,  
And the wind with a sighing wave,  
Then I am out of my mind.

I would go back to my kind,  
If I knew where I am, so would I,  
But child, I am mindless and blind,  
A mist that is blown by a sigh.

(2) Y . . . S

I.

*(Michael Robartes to His Beloved, telling her how the greatness  
of His Verse shall open to her the door of Heaven)*

This pearl-pale poem that I have pondered o'er,  
Made of a mouthful of the twilight air,  
And of one dream—the falling of your hair,  
Shall open for you the eternal door.

II.

*(Michael Robartes in the place of the distraught struggles against  
the spell which binds him)*

Outworn heart, come out from her hair,  
That brought upon you this lonely doom,  
And bound you down in the padded room,  
Away, come away, to less shadowy hair !  
There are hairs that blossom on foreheads more fair :  
Curls ever shining with tendrils gay,  
That twine and untwine as the winds are at play.  
Away, come away, to unshadowy hair.

## FROM "THE QUEEN'S THRESHOLD"

*Act I, (interrupted)*

### I.

What was it Queen Mary said  
As he climbed the stagey stair ?  
Comes a-singing in my head,  
Can you say who put it there ?

Plays of China and Japan,  
Plays of most reluctant Greece,  
Plays—for God's sake stop the man !  
Will his lecture never cease ?

And she twitched her garment's hem,  
But his silence had been wise ;  
What were all his plays to them  
On the stage with the Allies ?

### II.

But her poet answered her,  
This the aim of Fame would baulk.  
What's fame for, if not to air  
A gift for most immoderate talk ?

Peeresses a shining ring  
Yearn about me as I walk ;  
If a poet cannot sing  
He must talk, he must talk.

THE OLD MAN REFRESHING  
HIMSELF IN THE MORNING

I heard the old, old man say :  
    ' Mineral Waters,  
The doctor ordered me lithia.'  
His face was like the face one sees  
In Galway county families  
    By the halters  
Of flapper meetings led astray,  
Where tide is low and bookies' pay  
    Mostly falters.  
I heard the old, old man say :  
'What do you think will win to-day  
    By the waters ?'

## AMBITION IN CUFFE STREET

When I grow big I'll smoke and swear  
And drink like my old fellow there,  
I'll smoke till all the air is thick,  
I'll drink five pints and not feel sick,  
And use bad language to my fill,  
I will !

On a high stool for hours I'll sit,  
Or lean against the door and spit ;  
I'll drink each pint to the last sup,  
And tell the man to hurry up,  
Till I have had five tankards, yes,  
No less !

I'll talk with Jemmy Cassidy,  
He'll have grown old and fat like me,  
We'll talk of women and everything,  
And then perhaps we'll start to sing,  
We'll start to sing and fight and shout,  
'Twill take three men to chuck us out,  
By God, the things that I could do—  
Whew !

## PRAISE AND FRIENDSHIP

### *The Question*

#### I.

Why should you, when I praise your verse,  
My praise with leniency asperse,  
And put the cart before the horse,  
When Verse's kinship,  
Your gift direct and mine perverse,  
Makes up our friendship?

### *The Reply*

#### II.

When last you did a 'verse rehearse'  
You said in lines, like Redding's, terse :  
'Your gift direct and mine perverse'  
Ah, too correct!  
You will attain your fame per verse,  
And I die wrecked!

TO THE MAIDS NOT TO WALK  
IN THE WIND

When the wind blows walk not abroad,  
For maids, you may not know  
The mad, quaint thoughts that incommode  
Me, when the winds do blow.

What though the tresses of the treen  
In double beauty move,  
With silver added to their green,  
They were not made for love.

But when your clothes reveal your thighs,  
And surge around your knees,  
Until from foam you seem to rise  
Like Venus from the seas . . . . .

Though ye are fair, it is not fair!  
Unless ye will be kind,  
Till I am dead *and changed to air*,  
O walk not in the wind!



## THE HERMIT

As I went up by Harold's Grange and down by Sandyford  
I thought I saw a sandwich-man without a sandwich-board,  
A feather in his Trilby hat; two-buttoned swallow-tail—  
A heavy stick was in his hand, a mongrel on his trail.

But as he nearer drew to me I saw that there appeared  
A fervour in the flashing eyes above the long black beard,  
Which held my curiosity the more that I thought of it—  
Was this dismantled sandwich-man a seer or sage or prophet?

A foaming beverage rewards the traveller who toils  
Along the dusty mountain road that leads unto Lamb Doyle's.  
I saw which way the hermit went, for ere his mighty stride  
Scattered the pebbles in the yard, the door was opened wide.

## ON THE DEATH OF HIS AUNT

*(To the Gravediggers to inter her gently)*

O ye, who disinterested plant  
This mortal remnant of my Aunt,  
And, planting her, grow dry,  
Suspend your vacant pensiveness,  
And turn those thoughts to my distress  
Which pints preoccupy.

She was, as ye'd know if ye knew her,  
The widow of a worthy brewer,  
A brewer's worthy widow.  
And though some called her sentimental,  
I found her generous and gentle,  
Not minding what I did owe.

Between us Love was so prevailing  
That when she ailed I too was aleing,  
And on her husband's ale.  
(For though the evil that men do  
Lives after them, if men will brew  
The good will then prevail).

She loved him—oh, and I did strive  
For years to keep that name alive,  
Though it was on the bier.  
But since he's gone where all the best did,  
And she's by 'Sergeant Death' arrested,  
And I'm remaining here,

To mourn them both I'll wet my throttle  
With dark drinks from a sable bottle  
    With two Saint Andrew's crosses :  
And yours, and rest ; for well I know  
My grief will thus not cease to flow  
    In mourning o'er my losses.

## LUGETE VENERES CUPIDINESQUE

By what way, on what shore, does he wander,  
Or ghostly, through Lethe's ways flit ?  
On Mananan's swine does he squander  
The pearls of his wit ?

By what way has our singer afar gone ?  
What alien sky has he for roof ?  
Has he glutted the gorge of the Gorgon,  
The maw of Mahoof ?

O Boreas send him no wind bad  
To trouble or stir his repose,  
Who sang of the sorrows of Sindbad  
And Rosalie's woes.

Lest our Oliver asked and has had some  
Even where he has gone.  
Our Gogarty, garrulous, gladsome ;  
Our gentle St. John.

### *Chorus of Celtic Bards*

Over all his olden ways  
Lays the dark unknown its hood ;  
And where stood in songful days  
Cypress, laurel, ivy, oak.  
Rank weeds choke Parnassian fields  
And no harvest yields us now ;

Fitting flower for fancy's meed  
Laurel wreath for poet's brow.  
Is he then indeed most dead  
Has he fled our phallic feasts ?  
Ceased he singing, songs unsaid  
And our lobsters red released ?

Carson coloured like the morn,  
Shorn is all your radiant light ;  
Set in night of grief forlorn  
Mourn, O Murray, mournful wight.

He passed into that wayside inn unchallenged,  
unopposed,  
While I, who hurried after, heard the door behind  
him closed,  
And found myself confronted with the door-man's  
questions trite—  
“Business or pleasure? Traveller? Where did you  
sleep last night?”

The seer was seated solemnly before a pint of  
stout;  
He raised his glass as I came in and said to me, “No  
doubt  
You are a stranger on this road and do not gather  
quite  
The reason why they asked you where it was you  
slept last night.

“Now listen for a moment while another round  
they bring  
And I will tell you a most ex-traordinary  
thing;—  
This is the Druid's wisdom that the quiet mountains  
keep—  
All health and happiness depend on where a man  
may sleep.

“Though some men lie on feather beds and some on  
planks of wood,  
I make no difference between the evil and the  
good ;  
Last night I lay on Kilmashogue; to-night on  
Taylor’s hill,  
I make my bed at eventide, for such it is my  
will.

“And Power and Glory come to me upon the moun-  
tain side  
And wizard’s secrets known to none since mighty  
Merlin died;  
And all magnetic influence shed on me with the  
dew,  
That I may sway the minds of men, and hearts of  
women too.”

I may have seemed incredulous—for with suspicious  
stare  
The sage went on : “As sure as I am sitting in this  
chair  
There is no woman, rich or poor, who will not fol-  
low me,  
When she has been to my Round House and drunk  
my laurel tea.



“ And though I say these things to you it is not  
vanity,  
Or any virtue in myself but Nature’s power in  
me,  
That makes the girls look after me with longing as  
I pass  
Because I drink the magic spring and roll upon the  
grass.”

The thirsty travellers filled the room—it was my  
time to go,  
The Prophet’s voice grew louder (he saw his audience  
grow) ;  
I heard his last prediction—“ Now mark what my  
words are—  
The night the Kaiser sleeps due west will surely end  
the war.”

Prophet or Hermit, Seer or Sage, throughout my  
brain there ran  
Th’ experiences of this most ex-traordinary  
man ;  
I wondered were they really true, or did I dream  
them all,  
As I went up by Stepside and down by Golden  
Ball,

THRENODY ON THE DEATH OF DIOGENES,  
THE DOCTOR'S DOG

*Veterinary Surgeon :*

Take muzzle from mouth  
And the can from his tail,  
He's as dead from the drought  
As the deadly door-nail.  
I fear he has found hydrophobia, not even Pasteur  
may avail.

*Doctor :*

When I wambled awound  
In the gwound that was Greece  
I was given that hound  
By the King's little niece,  
And had rather be fined e'er I found him to gaze on  
his saddest surcease.

*Chorus (Scholars of the House) :*

He was given that hound  
By the seed of a King  
For the wisdom profound  
Of his wide wandering.  
But was it the owner, or donor, or dog that was led  
by a string ?

*Veterinary Surgeon :*

I can sell you a dog  
That will growl at the dons

And bark without brogue ;  
And if ever he cons  
The brazen-faced bust of his master, will waggle his  
tail at the bronze.

*Doctor :*

ὦ χαῖρε, ὦ κύον !  
No new one for me,  
For never a new one  
Again shall I see  
Like thee that art gone to the dogs in the home of  
Persephone.

*Chorus :*

For the dead dog no home is,  
Unless that it be  
Where the cats' hecatomb is  
Of pork butchery,  
When spaniels are sundered for sausage, fulfilled of  
catastrophe.

*Doctor (meditating) :*

The eagle is Zeus'  
A bird there may be—  
The owl too obtuse is  
The turtle too free  
To suitably serve as a symbol, a sign and a signal of  
me.

*Chorus :*

Leave Venus her turtles ;  
Mock turtle for thee,  
Who not among myrtles  
But rather would'st be  
Among the élite at a banquet, in the shade of a  
family tree.

*Doctor :*

What bird shall I get me  
That monarchs may know,  
And ladies beset me  
Wherever I go,  
All converts to my "Conversation" which only on  
these I bestow ?

*Chorus :*

Get hence to the land  
Whereof Bion did sing,  
When he wept on the strand  
And there swept on the wing  
A bird that is called the Kingfisher, and catch it to  
capture the King.

## HOW WOULD IT BE ?

How would it be if we should fare,  
By whispering to the pillar-box  
A spell of which I am aware,  
To some grey mountain whence the bear  
May turn him to the West and stare  
Nor yet see known land anywhere,  
And find there carven of the rocks  
An idol that can answer prayer ?

Or winding up a palace stair,  
Beyond the hills of Let's Pretend,  
Come suddenly and unaware  
Upon a monarch seated there,  
Whose eyes were angry and whose hair  
Was frizzled there at World's End  
By the sun's triumphant glare.

And how, indeed, how would it be  
If songs and little tales were true ?  
And we should find the jujube tree,  
And galleons still should cross the sea,  
And elves should lurk by every tree,  
And dragons amble two by two,  
While nobody should cry "Dear me !"

## THE PILGRIMAGE TO PLUNKETT HOUSE

I saw, Piers Plowman-like, a plain of men  
Who looked like people who look after cows,  
And to my query: 'Ho, what do ye then?'  
'We make the pilgrimage to Plunkett House.'

From every pasture, mountain, dale, and fen  
They issued gaily waving flags and boughs,  
And with one voice they chanted the refrain,  
'We make the pilgrimage to Plunkett House.'

'Tell me,' I shouted, 'if a clucking hen  
Can't rear a pheasant, can she rear a grouse?'  
But with one voice they chanted the refrain,  
'We make the pilgrimage to Plunkett House.'

'Poets precede us and we common men  
With lukewarm fervour many a cause espouse:  
So that we catch the Golden Crop again  
We make the pilgrimage to Plunkett House.'

'Mecca is under sand, Jerusalem  
Is in Chicago with an Oil King's spouse,  
Is there a prophet left us?' And from them,  
'We make the pilgrimage to Plunkett House.'

Some say he was a man of beard and brawn,  
And that to such we should not pay our vows,  
But we know well that he is Mananaun  
Who make the pilgrimage to Plunkett House.



The sand-stone pillars rise, the plated door  
Swings as the handle, sun-wise turned, allows ;  
The hosts are kneeling on the stairs and floor,  
Who make the pilgrimage to Plunkett House.

This is the place : the sacred air is thick,  
Each herd of the believers gently lows ;  
This is the shrine : the wall with gods is quick ;  
We make the pilgrimage to Plunkett House.

Here is the seat where every morn at ten  
The kind god chaunted and the crops arose,  
There is the dungeon for the gombeen men  
Who make no pilgrimage to Plunkett House.

‘ What offerings bring ye, ye that come from far  
O’er valleys and the gloom of mountain brows,  
What offering to the High-Priest-Registrar  
Who reads the omens in the Plunkett House ? ’

‘ We offer at this shrine of Mananaun’s  
Potatoes that were Champions in their youth,  
So may the grass grow lushly on the lawns  
Of all the Pilgrims to the House of Truth.’

*(Poets of the Plunkett House chaunting :—)*

E’er out of Dana Banba came,  
Man kept himself with milk and corn ;



Death after life was much the same,  
And Life—result of being born.  
But Dana cast on men a dream,  
She knew the songsters and their ilk :  
To poets first she gave the cream,  
To others separated milk.  
Therefore to Dana let us pray,  
To Dana and to Mananaun,  
That, having hearkened us, she may  
Persuade him bless each loft and lawn.  
Oh, Goddess hearken to the lot  
Of these thy pilgrims come from far,  
The sacred carrot faileth not,  
And thunder rumbles round Rathgar.

## A LAMENT FOR GEORGE MOORE

Lonely, O Moore, your old friends are ;  
We miss you ; and, forgive the banter,  
We miss the generous cigar,  
The coy decanter.

We miss the nights when you were here—  
All Ely Place a catacomb,  
Where we sat solemn and severe  
Denouncing Rome.

We were the Stellar Zodiac  
You took your part in :  
Virgo Magee, Leo Æ,  
And Edward Martyn.

Who hailed your firstlings as they grew  
Chapter by chapter ;  
And when we showed our Muse to you  
You did adapt her !

Guidance from thoughts thus crowding thick  
Was what you needed.  
You were the grandest Catholic  
That e'er seceded.

Thus through a window shines your ray  
All polychrome,  
For "still the light that led astray  
Was light from " Rome.

We miss Les Dames aux Temps jadis,  
And all whose Christian names would fall so  
Ingenuously of living ladies—  
We miss them also.

Now Yeats suggests (with Goethe) here  
The likeliest measure of a mind  
Is—what we can't find anywhere—  
The girls it leaves behind.

O bad gray head good women knew,  
There comes a thought unmixed with sadness,  
In that the worst that you could do  
Was hardly badness!

O hazardous and harmless lover,  
Come back to Ireland, come back and bring  
(What though your writings are all passed over)  
In your person a Playboy unguessed at by Synge!

# TO GEORGE MOORE ON THE OCCASION OF HIS WEDDING

(*"Inexpressive Nuptial Song"*)

(BALLADE)

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## FAME

If I live to be very old

They will know me then for a poet.

When my blood is sombre and cold,

If I live to be very old,

They will shout, 'We know it. We know it.'

And I will be vexed by the riot,

And turn from my sloppy diet

To pray for a little quiet.







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